



County Administrative Office
Governmental & Legislative Affairs

Josh Candelaria
Director

April 10, 2017

The Honorable Tony Thurmond
California State Assembly
State Capitol Building
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: **AB 1164** (Thurmond) – As Amended on March 27, 2017 – **SUPPORT**

Dear Assemblyman Thurmond:

The County of San Bernardino is writing in support of AB 1164 which would establish the Emergency Child Care Bridge Program for Foster Children to facilitate access to child care for foster youth. Through the provisions of child care vouchers and/or payments, navigator services, and trauma-informed training and coaching for child care providers, AB 1164 aims to stabilize foster children with families at the time of placement. This bill would bridge foster parents, relative caregivers and parenting foster youth to long-term subsidized child care.

When children are removed from their parents due to abuse and neglect, they are in crisis and need a safe, loving family environment. One of the top barriers to families taking in a foster child is the cost of child care immediately following a child's removal from the home. Current foster care grants provide for the basic care and supervision of foster children but do not cover the costs of child care. Foster families cannot immediately access child care subsidies as these programs often operate at full capacity. Additionally, relative caregivers are not eligible for the basic foster care rate until they are fully approved to care for a foster child, which can take up to 90 days after the child is placed. Moreover, without immediate child care, potential caregivers who are employed cannot take in a child without significantly disrupting their lives or incurring financial hardship.

The recruitment of foster families is essential for San Bernardino County's continued implementation of the state's Continuum of Care Reform. Readily available child care will support our county's efforts to connect a child with a loving family immediately. AB 1164 would assist with vouchers for families to access child care, navigators to assist families with accessing long-term child care, and training for child care providers on how to best meet the needs of abused and neglected children.

For these reasons, the County of San Bernardino is pleased to support AB 1164. If you have any questions regarding the County's position, please do not hesitate to contact Josh Candelaria, Director of Governmental and Legislative Affairs at (909) 387-4821 or jcandelaria@sbcounty.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert A. Lovingood".

Lovingood
First District Supervisor
Chairman, San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors

c: San Bernardino County Legislative Delegation

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